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...the papers the author
claim to find, or even to be
...tell me, tell me now his
...my faulty reason fails.
...page 2).

...the professor
desires to join, or
in 1908, tell me, tell me now his
"I feel my faulty reason fails."
(page 2).
alligone, CBEL
"Vero"

"I feel my fault"
Cage & CBEL
all yours, verse
in DNB, etc.
Ethan Mochel





ERR O.



A ROMANTIC POEM.

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E R R O,

A Romantic Poem.

BY

EDWARD NOYCE BROWNE.

"The Summer's flower is to the Summer sweet,
Tho' to itself it only live and die."

SHAKSPEARE.

LONDON:

THOMAS HODGSON, ALDINE CHAMBERS,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1840.

THOMS, PRINTER, WARWICK SQUARE.

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Barney

dwelling

house

place

road

street

town

village

two

very

to

PLAN OF THE POEM, &c.

ERRO, the Pilgrim, is an aged man, whose mind unceasingly dwelling on an event which forms the grief-shadow of his history, devotes his life to wandering, and continually seeking to alleviate the ills of others. The Poem consists of distinct narratives, in which the Pilgrim more or less figures: *each tale is in itself complete*, with only so much of the old man's history interwoven as was deemed necessary to excite an interest, leaving his personal narrative for the close of the Poem.

Two Parts, or stories, are here published, and on their reception will depend the completion of the plan.

To offer further introductory remarks on such a trifle as the

following, would be giving it a false importance ; unless, indeed it were to add in the words of Cowper :—"I have no more right to the name of a Poet, than a maker of mousetraps has to that of Engineer, but my little exploits in this way have at times amused me so much, that I have often wished myself a good one.—Such a talent in verse as mine, is like a child's rattle, very entertaining to the trifler that uses it ; and very disagreeable to all beside."

September, 1840.

TO POESIE.

Oh ! POESIE ! whose magic breathings fill
The ev'ning's perfum'd gale with music sweet ;
Thou who canst wake a voice in ev'ry rill
And make all nature in one landscape meet ;
Who does not crave thy wings—thy fairy feet,
To wander o'er the wide expanse of earth,
And with a soul replete with gladness greet
Each scene blithe FANCY'S wand has charm'd to birth,
And peopled with ærial forms of grief or mirth ?

2

But thy divinity is better shown
When the heart dreams its dearest dream, and we
Find in this desert we are not alone !—
Who turns, o'er-joy'd from saddest things that be,
To love—which is impassion'd sympathy—
Possesses earth's chief boon ; yet were it not
For guiling Poesie, yes, but for thee
Some past example might forbode a lot,
That by the unforgotten we should be forgot.

3

It is not so ; we gaze on beauty's brow
Till looks become the language of the heart ;
Truth seems the parent of each whisper'd vow ;
Unconsciously do we our love impart
As do the stars their beauty.—Then thou art
With us Poesie—then by thee we're led
In gentle dreams—then saddest cares depart—
And yet they are.

On earth may we not tread,
And, looking into heav'n, deem that all else is dead ?

4

From the sad tomb of many a vanish'd year,
How dost thou all its buried joys awake !
It is no simple boon, when on the ear
The voices of the dear departed break,
And with them once again we commune make.
How deal'st thou with the future ?—Oft we see
Scenes we have thought in living pictures wake—
Looks grown to love, and hopes to things that be !
These are life's dearest joys—these—these are Poesie.



ERR O.

Part II.—The Mystery:

“ —All that we know, or feel, or see
Shall pass like an unreal mystery.”

SHELLEY

“ Her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection.”

SHAKESPEARE

ERR O.

Part I.—The Pilgrim.

I

THE golden tints of eve were melting fast ;
The woodland minstrels pour'd their latest song,
When from a hill an aged Pilgrim cast
His time-dimm'd eye a distant scene along.
He mark'd the mists of night begin to throng,
While the fond sun, as charm'd with earth's attire,
Did ling'ringly his farewell kiss prolong ;
Afar to heav'n was ocean seen aspire,
Whereon past day had writ its death in tints of fire.

II.

“Vale of my youth ! I see thee once again,
Calm as the heav’n that now withdraws its light ;
The shadowy mists that round thy charms remain,
Are beautiful as daylight’s dream of night.
Soft ! do I hear her step ? With mad delight
Beats my fond heart ; the winds in silence die,
And with me in a listening calm unite.
Dear hours of joy ! I love thee, though the sigh
Of after years has dimm’d the mirror where ye lie.

III.

“She comes—she comes—one moment more—and now
Speechless with joy she hangs upon my breast ;
And the fond smiles upon her blushing brow,
Light me to her soul’s secrets.—I am blest,
For all the world’s in wedding garment drest !
Charm on, sweet charmer, let me hear and see
All that fond hope e’er ask’d and love carest ;
Charm on, sweet charmer, thou art all to me,
Making thought move in its own music like the sea.

IV.

“Now do I hear the echo of her heart—
She speaks of future, which like fairy land
Bursts from a cloud of words, henceforth a part
Of our existence.—Yes, here did she stand,
And looking fondly in my face, oft plann’d
A world that was all kind—friends that ne’er fail’d—
Days of delight—nights that fond dreams command—
Skies speaking heav’n’s poësy—bright scenes hail’d
Alone by fancy’s eye, and in their own charms veil’d.

V.

“The earth entombs the beauty it has bred,
And heav’n’s soft tints in their own brightness fade.
My Gertrude! my lov’d Gertrude! I have shed
Tears that have writ repentance where they laid;
Grief like a melancholy wind has play’d,
Low, sighing, sad about my soul.
Afar
Who has not seen in night-wove, sable shade,
The one bright gem—the love-creating star,
And then its distance conn’d—then thought of what we are?”

VI.

Such ERRO's words, the while he gaz'd around
Beguiling thus the current of his thought;
For he was one whose eye unfailing found
In all its wand'rings much with beauty fraught;
Such were his joys, his heart he ever taught
To dwell on present—past disturb'd his rest,
Since there liv'd all that grief he ever sought
By change of scene to banish from his breast;
Though there were times when mem'ry brook'd not his behest.

VII.

For though long years have pow'r to soothe our ills—
To calm the sorrows of a blighted heart—
What more can they bestow! time seldom kills;
And oft, a form—a voice—are found to start
A train of buried woes, to wake a smart
The first wild throb of which has long past by;
And such at times to vision will impart
Those forms though dead to earth, yet never die—
Though lost to sight yet oft-times meet the wand'ring eye.

VIII.

Calm was the old man's look ; his locks were grey,
And feeble was his frame, and slow his flight.
Adown the hill he ling'ring trac'd his way ;
Pausing as each new object charm'd his sight,
Thus onward past, until he did alight
On the smooth verge of ocean's wide domain,
Though ere that verge he reach'd, the gems of night
Had through the cloudless ether smiled again ;
Whilst high the pale moon rose o'er lesser lights to reign.

IX.

As o'er her brow the white translucent cloud
Is seen to float—Oft such is found to mar
Her light, while fancy wild doth shape that shroud
To seraph forms, and dreams they're sent afar
As messengers to some blest world—a star.
And as they fleetly from the eye retire
And heighten fancy, from the flying car
We hear a voice like soft, melodious lyre,
Harping through heav'n's blue arch, the Deity's desire.

X.

Here on the glittering strand the Pilgrim stroll'd,
Listening as did the ocean's whisper pour,
Until he thought those voiceful waters told
A tale of those who'd sunk for evermore ;
Anon, he deem'd he heard a voice sweep o'er
The moonlit wave, whose breathings seem'd like those
Which dying lips impart, when they implore
A blessing for the cherish'd forms who close
Around their faltering sight, ere wrapt in death's repose,

XI.

Then ev'ry bark that did the ripples lave,
To him seem'd like a spectre of the deep,
Just risen from the long lost seaman's grave,
To mark the spot where last he fell asleep ;
Phantoms thus strange obtrusively would creep
Athwart his mind :—at length he mark'd before,
A maid, whose feet o'er rock-strew'd strand did sweep,
Lightly as gay thoughts heedless gliding o'er
Those rugged ills too thickly scatter'd on life's shore,

XII.

Upon her brow a cloud of sadness sate,
So fixed, each feature shar'd its grief-deep gloom ;
Seeming like sculptur'd emblems to relate
The death of reason—they its living tomb.
Alas! that ever such were beauty's doom,
For in those lineaments still linger'd grace,
To memory whisp'ring of an hour of bloom,
Which never more the loving eye might trace,
For madness like death's smile spoke voiceless from her face.

XIII.

She wound a snow-white scarf of fragile web,
Round bosom fair as robe did e'er adorn,
Then stood, as tho' to mark the tide-course ebb,
With drooping head, as flow'r at early morn,
Waiting heav'n's wakeful smile to be re-born.
A simple ribbon held her long black hair,
Deck'd with a white rose from its bow'r just torn,
To fade upon a forehead not less fair—
She paus'd, and then these words did melt in conscious air.

1

“Ye restless waves whose glitt’ring crests
 Reflect the peerless lights of heav’n ;
Oh ! tell me, tell me, where he rests,
 Ere memory from my brain be driv’n.

2

“Yes, tell me, tell me now his fate,
 I feel my faulty reason fails—
His latest whisper’d words relate,
 Then waft me to his grave, ye gales.

3

“There may I lie, and may the wave
 That wanders o’er his pallid lips,
Fondly these scarce less pallid lave,
 And leave a kiss as on it skips.”

XIV.

Hush'd is the voice—a sleepy stillness reigns,
The Pilgrim thoughtful marks the maiden's gaze,
Yet all unchang'd and pensive she remains ;
While move her lips as 'twere in speechless praise—
Adown her cheek tear after tear quick strays.—
A moment—all is chang'd—joy lights her eye,
Soft smiles 'neath dewy grief her face betrays,
Like morning struggling with the mists that lie
Around the new-born light they dimly beautify.

XV.

Soon with wild joy she reach'd the aged man,
And round his form her arms in fondness twin'd;
Then her dark eye she fixed, as 'twere to scan
The inward workings of his wand'ring mind.
“ You've come too late, for I know where to find
My sleeping love.—There, were the moon's pale light,
By glitt'ring gems of the deep ocean shrin'd,
Mark his grave—yes—there by an ocean sprite
Those gems are strew'd—Gather them ere they sink from sight.

XVI.

“Behold! how bright—how beautiful his shrine!
Then look afar to yon blue sea on high;
Each star that speaks to earth of love divine
Contains a human soul—*his* I desery!
My hope is from there—hope that ne’er will die
Though clasp’d by death! Hast thou e’er seen the brow’
Of a cold, damp corse smile? and knows’t thou why?
Death cannot all destroy—so hear my vow!
Nay pause, for the eternal heav’ns are speaking now!”

XVII.

A cloud past o’er the moon as thus she spoke,
Home to its heav’n earth’s silver robe has fled,
And ere from cloudy bondage it had broke;
Far on the shore the maniac maid had sped.
Strange thoughts were moving in the old man’s head,
Long his eye sought again her form to greet.
“I’ll on, and trace her step,” at length he said,
“Nor thus we’ll part if once again we meet,”
Oh! were these aged eyes less dim, these limbs more fleet.

XVIII.

There on the wave-smooth'd strand the Pilgrim stray'd,
Till well nigh in forgetfulness beguil'd ;
The quiet scene oft turn'd he and survey'd
Whereon the melancholy moon still smil'd,
(Whose brow no more the passing cloud defil'd);
Ere long afar he saw a beacon bright
Perch'd on a group of rocks, of aspect wild,
To serve the mariner in danger's night,
There sought he shelter, and was welcom'd with delight.

XIX.

For who can look with harshness on old age,
Boon of mortality !—Nature's stern wreck !
At the Leech laughing—smiling at the Sage,
As each alike its progress seeks to check.
Behold the furrow'd brow grey hairs bedeck—
The trembling hand, the dim, and half-closed eye,
All big hopes dwindl'd to a tiny speck :
Some thoughts have dug their graves, and in them lie,
And some have lost themselves whilst wand'ring in the sky.

XX.

And he who trimm'd the beacon's lofty light,
Look'd back o'er many a year for youth's blithe day:
Few things he met to move him with delight,
Yet when he mark'd that brow which seem'd to say
Good-will to all—to sympathy gave way,
And joy'd to meet with such a genial breast.
Once more the Pilgrim ERRO's heart grew gay,
Right merrily the hour past on with jest
And song, and legends rude, in ruder accents drest.

XXI.

And ever and anon the gay host told
Of perils brav'd upon the pathless sea,
At length his words a stranger tale unfold,
Which woke the Pilgrim from his reverie ;
Of her he spake, who from him late did flee,
And strange the tale—and full of wild romance—
Ere long the old man whisper'd “yes 'twas she,”
Passing his hand across his eyes, whose glance
Fell where the moon beams on the rippling ocean dance.

XXII.

Calm was the scene—the wild tide's fretful foam
Was creeping on some distant land once more,
The fisher's bark had long since wander'd home,
And rested sailless on the broad, smooth shore,
The deep—(star lighted arch of heav'n smil'd o'er)
Heav'd its broad bosom as in sleep, and there
The mutt'ring waves their dreams of storms did pour.
While the low whisper of a gentle air
Seem'd like the voice of nature, breathing forth a pray'r.

XXIII.

Here till the glory of the coming day,
O'er the long line of the horizon rose,
Here till night's orbs had wan'd and past away;
And nature 'gan to wake from her repose.
The old man's eye in sleep refused to close,
He thought unceasing of the maid whose tale,
With all he late had seen, woke many throes,
And when he slept, he sigh'd, as might a gale
That storm had wearied out reposing in a dale.

XXIV.

Full many a morn and midnight pass'd away,
Nor went he from that strand now render'd dear,
From seeing there lost Laura oft-times stray,
Tho' watchful hands were ever loit'ring near;
And tho' she only met his face with fear
Yet had she work'd such interest in his breast,
At times upon his cheek there gleam'd a tear,
Just crept from eyes, which on that form would rest
Fondly as though their smile caressing were carest.

XXV.

Who has not mark'd the exquisite delight,
Which early fondness seldom-fails to lend,
When eye meets eye, with beauty beaming bright,
And heart, voice, soul in harmony will blend,
When gentle looks are made the wings to send
All a soul's softness to the lov'd one's breast;
When future hopes in painted pleasures end,—
When ev'ry dream in poësy's robe is drest,
And the heart breathes a joy by no sad pangs oppress!

XXVI.

And Laura lov'd—her tale is briefly told,
The sun that lit her world of thought had fled,
Though why or where, none knew, 'twas said that gold
Had lur'd him—that the ocean was his bed.
When woman's heart some object frail has wed,
To her the world is dead, and she will cast
Her eyes upon its grave, and love to shed
Tears full of fond reproachfulness for past,
And hug a grief-creating memory to the last.

XXVII.

And 'twas no goodly sight to see that maid
When she no more was woo'd by love's fond smile;
A voiceful grief around her reason play'd
As whisp'ring sea might round a rocky pile,
Till lost within the waters, then awhile
By none 'tis seen, haply ne'er thought of more.
And thus remorse did Laura's mind beguile.
But while this picture sad we're pond'ring o'er
We'll dream that each is wash'd upon the hallow'd shore.

XXVIII.

Thus Laura past into eternity,
As heav'n's own beauty melts into its light.
Then by a frowning, antique hall stood he,
The Pilgrim ERRO—Laura's home bedight
With gloom, and casements clos'd to sadden sight.—
Thoughts drew his mind to better land, more near—
His darkest griefs had morning to their night ;
And though he met this ill with holy fear,
Upon the chastening hand he wept a joy-born tear.

XXIX.

Here ERRO mus'd upon lost Laura's fate,
And little heeded he the scene around,
As shelter'd from the noon-day sun he sate,
Though much to charm the heart might here be found.
The cotter's calm abode, by wild flowers bound,—
The moss grown mill—its slowly turning wheel;
A stream all noiseless as the ghost of sound
Along the valley slothfully did steal,
And in the distance dim as silver vein reveal.

XXX.

And rising from the green of cluster'd trees
Was seen a sacred pile, with turrets grey,
From thence death's knell, brought by the wand'ring breeze,
Sadly upon the list'ning ear did play,
And to the old man seemingly did say:—
Here halt, mark how the living treat the dead!
While far and near the villager did stray,
With melancholy looks and downcast head.
Sad groups assembled there, who spoke of days long fled.

XXXI.

Now from the portal of the hall slow sweeps
Lost Laura's obsequies, the daughter fair
Of its proud Lord, whose heart in sorrow weeps,
With hearts, that seldom wept, yet falter'd there;
And whilst along the hamlet they repair,
The seaman and the peasant join the throng;
Oft as they pass the Cotter's home, a pray'r
From aged lips comes stealing soft along
The senses sad, like angels' sweet and soothing song.

XXXII.

Advancing slow, in solemn pomp the train
At length within the holy pile doth rest ;
Where waits the man of God to breathe again,
An earthly blessing on the heav'nly blest.
A Sepulchre, with antique emblems drest,
Ere long enshrines the corpse in its damp gloom ;
And many a curious eye has forward prest
To gaze upon decay—to mark on whom
The crumbling hand of death has wrought its dusty doom.

XXXIII.

And as their downcast eyes regard the dead,
How strange to mark the aspect of each face,—
Here deepest sorrow dwells—there signs of dread—
Some brows there are o'er which a smile doth chace—
Some fixed in speechless thought—some prate apace,
Whilst others gaze on vacancy and sigh.
Mens' minds are varied as the flow'rs that grace
The field, where many seem of kindred dye,
But view'd anear, what endless diff'rence meets the eye.

XXXIV.

The day light speeds the mason's thoughtless mirth,
(Which as they wrought—oft echo'd in the tomb)
No more burst o'er those souls now lost to earth,
And hope could deem in happier world to bloom.
Eve creeps fast on, and fills with twilight gloom
The aisle where yet is heard the Pilgrim's tread.
When lo! he sees a form, he knows not whom—
A lady veil'd—then came her Page; each sped
To Laura's grave, though neither rais'd a downcast head.

XXXV.

Now did the Page withdraw—his Lady knelt
Where Laura's dust will with her sires unite;
Unseen the old man on her features dwelt,
As dim and faint the ev'ning's dying light
Through painted casement smil'd a last good night.
And when from her pale brow her veil she cast
He mark'd pale features speaking sad delight;
Though tears not yet had from dark lashes past,
And new-born joy was there to kiss away the last!

XXXVI.

As thus he look'd upon her fair young face,
Telling of holy meekness heav'nward bent,
In those pale lineaments his eye could trace
A semblance to that maid's o'er whom she leant,
When gentler hours would happier looks present.
The same soft light did in those bright eyes play ;
There was a lip from which a language went
Although it spoke not ; and her dark locks may
With sleeping Laura's vie—But hark she breathes a lay :

I

“ Dear Sister ! as beside thy tomb
My soul shall breathe to heav'n a prayer,
I'll bless thy last sad night of gloom
Whose morning found thee smiling there.
For what was life to thee ? alas !
’Twas but a dream of life, where’s seen
All that has gone, yet will not pass,
But leaves a grave where it has been.

Rest Sister, rest !

2

“ And if perchance an empty smile
Beam’d o’er thy pallid brow awhile,
It seem’d the mocking ghost of those
Long buried in thy tomb of woes.
Thy words were like the whisp’ring wind
That speaks, yet leaves no thought behind ;
Oft such my soul with grief would fill.
But ah ! thou wert my Sister still !

Rest Sister, rest !

3

“ Rest Sister, rest ! and never more
Will I thy early fate deplore,
But fondly look into the sky
Until it opens to mine eye ;
Then sad regret will pass away
Unknown, unfelt as night in day ;
Then tears shall be as stars to woe
That come in darkness—bless—and go.

Rest Sister, rest !

XXXVII.

The melody swept o'er the old man's breast,
Awak'ning many a thought from its calm sleep;
For melody will on the heart's chords rest
Until in very fondness it will weep,
While the sad spirit of the past doth creep
Athwart the dreaming mind, and in its flight
Point to those forms which ever vigils keep
In chamber'd thought. Moments of sad delight!
Ye only come like stars to tell that it is night.

XXXVIII.

Long as a last adieu from those we love,
The lady's lay lurk'd in the old man's ear;
And oft those sounds may o'er his senses move,
And he may hold their melancholy dear.
The lady kneels no more—the page draws near,
For well that little urchin's eye could take
The slightest sign her speaking face might wear;
So favour'd too, forsooth, at times she'd break
The iron rules of birth as now, for thus she spake:—

XXXIX.

“ When last, my little page, soft sleep like night,
Crept o’er the busy landscape of my mind,
(Dimming its mournful visions from my sight,
As gentler dreams came on while they declin’d,)
Methought I heard a tale told sadly kind,
By a bright form, to whom I turn’d to hear
The joy which earth-born souls in heav’n shall find!
And passing fond such fell upon mine ear;
But now, alas! not e’en to mem’ry it draws near.

XL.

“ And all I know of the dear dream is this:
Methought I ask’d the spirit to reveal
If my lost sister’s soul now liv’d in bliss?
And then it bid me from a bow’r to steal
A bud whose leaves might new-born rose conceal;
Then throw it on her tomb at eve’s still hour,
And if, when morn o’er earth his smiles should deal,
That em’rald bud should bloom a full-grown flow’r,
Would live my Sister’s soul in heav’n’s eternal bow’r.

XLI.

“ So hither come, my page, at early morn :—
Bring, quickly, bring a flow’ret blooming fair.
My sister ! I will think this dream was born
In heav’n, and by thee sent to soothe my care.”
Thus spake she, as a new-born bud fell where
Late fell her tears ;—the page bow’d his assent,
And still his lady breath’d a mutter’d pray’r,
As down the twilight aisle each slowly went,
And oft she turn’d and look’d on Laura’s grave intent.

XLII.

We follow phantoms vague, which for awhile
Have power to lure aside stern reason’s ray,
And sweetly such the thoughtful hours beguile
As Fancy’s lur’d by their bright dreams away—
All full of hope as tho’ they’d ne’er decay.
On, on she speeds as a gay butterfly
Chasing its shadow on a sunny day,
Till its creating sun has wander’d by
When lo ! the phantom’s fled, no more to meet the eye.

XLIII.

And well the Pilgrim knew how passing dear
The Lady held her sweet deluding thought ;
For more he knew than may to some appear—
To eyes which ne'er beyond the surface sought—
Within, within, his mining mind had wrought.
Soon from a casement, round whose circle grew
As fair a wreath as e'er a sun beam caught
He pluck'd a full blown rose, which soon he threw
On Laura's grave, where laid the bud his hand withdrew.

XLIV.

Joy! joy is mine, the old man inly cried,
To deem I've blest a fellow pilgrim's heart,
Oh! who such heav'n born thought would seek to chide?
Can man to man a brighter boon impart?
And should some hour those scenes of sadness start
Which late before mine eye so fleetly flew,
Methinks one half their sadness will depart
To feel such joy did from those ills accrue.
Such were his thoughts as o'er that tomb he breath'd adieu.

XLV.

Here never more the aged man was seen,—
When morning smiled he'd journey'd far away,
For there was much in all around I ween
To wake the dream of his more happy day ;
And oft he found the harsher thought decay
As varied objects met his pensive mind,
But when such fail'd then forward would he stray,
Nor few the grateful hearts he left behind,—
Much sympathy for woe his pitying heart did find.

XLVI.

Some years had past when on a sabbath morn
Stretch'd bleeding—lifeless upon Laura's grave,
Lay he, for whom her fatal love was born !—
So alter'd was his mien none knew him save
One mariner, to whom the gossips gave
Unearthly power—his death-fixed form was clad
As those who love the ocean's storm to brave—
Belted and pistol'd—at his side he had
A poniard, and a flask to make the faint heart glad.

XLVII.

His shrouded brow was lifted from the stone—
A gentle smile spoke from his pallid face ;
His long black hair was o'er his shoulders thrown—
Adown his vest the half-chill'd blood did chase ;
They bar'd his breast, the fatal wound to trace,
Deep in his heart the deadly steel had been !
Some look'd in wonder ; some the church did pace ;
Some sought afar and near the cause to glean,
But never yet was light thrown on that mystic scene !

XLVIII.

And when they mov'd him from the blood-stain'd grave
They saw his right hand held a rusted knife ;
Oh ! who unmov'd the touching sight could brave ?
Mark the last effort of his struggling life !
'Neath Laura's name (to him more dear than wife,)
His dying hand had faintly trac'd his own,
Though blunted instrument, and death's rude strife
Had wellnigh balk'd his wish. To all 'twas shown,
And some wept on the spot—and some shed tears alone.

XLIX.

But ever from the wond'ring world is seal'd
The mystery of this melancholy tale.
Laura was lov'd!—no more can be reveal'd—
Naught more can ever human ear assail ;
Ev'n this her sister did not live to hail.
All now are resting in that tomb—and we
Will dream that they have left this troubl'd vale
For where not one sad thought of earth can be—
Where naught but heav'n is seen—heard but heav'n's minstrelsy.

L.

Oh! Past! thou Ocean to the stream of time !
Who has not stood upon thy sable shore,
And heard thy melancholy waters chime
The knell of hours we live but to deplore ?
Roll back awhile and let us ponder o'er
Those scenes of mystery thy waves enshrine :
Roll back awhile and let us stand before
The truth of things we may not now divine.
Impenetrable Past—a vanish'd World is thine !

ERR O.

Part II.—The Spirit of the Lake.

“ The gods themselves
Humbling their deities to love, have taken
The shapes of beasts upon them : Jupiter
Became a bull, and bellowed : the green Neptune
A ram, and bleated : and the fire-rob'd god,
Golden Apollo, a poor humble swain.
* * * Their transformations
Were never for a piece of beauty rarer ;
Nor in a way so chaste.”

SHAKSPEARE'S WINTER'S TALE.

ERROR.

Part II.—The Spirit of the Lake.

I.

Now in the dimples of morn's smiling face
The shadows of past moments slowly hide ;
Stars melt to light, and darkness into space,
While new-born sun-beams from pale æther glide
As spirits to the earth ; the lark has hied
To heav'n, and hung the air with melody.
The world is stirring ; wakeful sound hath sigh'd
Into the ear of silence, and we see,
Blest morn ! the flow'rs look up and voiceless worship thee.

II.

Such was the summer hour—such was the scene,
Which met the Pilgrim ERRO's musing eye :
Rich, past'ral lands, of many a varied green,
Divided with the well trimm'd hedge, and by
The furrow'd lanes, far scatter'd, homes did lie ;
There was the village spire seen peeping through
The cluster'd trees—afar you might descry
The gently swelling hills, like clouds of dew,
Which mingling seem'd a part of heav'n's eternal blue.

III.

In thoughtful mood the old man forward sped
To group of peasants 'neath a distant tree ;
There from the cloudless sun awhile they'd fled
To rest beneath its shading canopy,
Share the repast, then toil anew with glee ;
And 'mong them was a maid, with artful look,
Whose legends rude made time pass merrily,
But those who ask'd from whence those tales she took,
Naught heard, save they were whisper'd by a babbling brook.

IV.

At length the maiden speaks of Burton-Hall,
Whose turrets from a distant wood high soar ;
Quick on those turrets eager eyes do fall,
While some low, whispering, prate strange rumours o'er ;
Some wish for those wild revelries once more
Which erst did in its ancient walls prevail ;
And now all list as they had oft before,
To her who of that mansion tells a tale ;
As with these words did she their list'ning ears assail :

1

Low in the grave Lord Burton's laid

The last of that proud name ;

His antique hall is desolate

His broad lands are the same.

And sad's the tale he's left behind—

Its gloom hath smote forgiveness blind.

2

One night he call'd his vassals loud,
When lo! beside him laid
His gentle wife, dead, pale and cold!
And all who saw her said
While yet they gaz'd, with frighted stare,
Her hand trac'd murder in the air.

3

Time would not bury the foul deed;
Her only child grew fair;
And those who on the maiden gaz'd
Beheld her mother there.—
The rose that o'er a grave doth grow
May haply lead the thought below.

4

A woman's love's her history,
Past, present, future, all;
And oft her best affection's bloom
Is wither'd, for its pall.
Her greatest happiness, how brief—
The sigh of joy—the smile of grief.

5

And Eleänor lov'd with that love
Which gives its life for aye;
The smiles of him who lov'd her kiss'd
Her tears of grief away—
The darkest storm her mind e'er felt
Beneath love's iris tints would melt.

6

One hapless eve Lord Burton found
His daughter by the side
Of her heart's joy.—With ling'ring step
Did they to twilight glide
Till all the world seem'd dead—they mov'd
In their own universe—they lov'd.

7

He parted them!—With sighing heart
Sought Eugene distant land,
And Eleänor, shut from the world,
Her own destruction plann'd;
In lonely cell, though none knew where,
Save him, her sire, who led her there.

8

There is a broad and quiet lake
By Burton's hall,—and there
Floating was seen the scarlet scarf,
That Eleänor did wear.
As o'er that lake the sad winds creep,
They halt and sigh—then onward sweep.

9

There rests that maid—calm be her sleep!
To all her mem'ry's dear,
Tho' but the melancholy moon
Vouchsaf'd her grave a tear.
No emblems mark her early grave,
But heav'n is mirror'd in that wave.

10

'Tis said a cloud is floating seen
To kiss those waters bright,
Till moon-beams melt the shroud away,
And show a spirit white ;—
As though one free'd from earthly care
Had left its shadow in the air.

V.

Save her who sang, all seek again the field,
For long the Pilgrim commun'd with the maid,
Though seldom that he ask'd her lips reveal'd,
As with him tow'rd the village road she stray'd;
Then the lone path to Burton's lands betray'd.
And, as they parted, with a fear-fixed face,
She bade him rest not there in midnight shade,
For all had peopl'd the surrounding place
With sprites and visions, such as melt in day's embrace.

VI.

By mossy pathway led, the old man stroll'd
Until he reach'd the broad, clear, winding lake,—
A glittering couch for noon-day's tints of gold,
Wherein o'er hanging trees did landscape make;
There pictur'd Eleänor, nor sigh'd to wake
From the sad dream, lov'd for its very care.
No sound was heard the noon-day cam o break
Save a low sigh that wander'd in the air,
And only serv'd to tell that silence slumber'd there.

VII.

As from the scene of quiet he did stray,
His listening ear was startled by a sound ;
Then saw he one who slowly trac'd his way
Through leaf-strew'd grove ; old age not yet had bound
Its tell-tales round his frame—upon the ground
His eye was bent, whose sad expression told
That in his mind some grief a home had found—
His dress was of a distant clime, the gold
Tints of whose sunny sky had tann'd his features bold.

VIII.

'Twas he, long absent Eugene ! such the name
Of him who lov'd the hapless Eleānor.
Oft with her to this quiet spot he came
To tell of ills, which made them lov'd the more.
Here to her list'ning Eugene she'd deplore,
Her father's ire—her mother's mystic fate—
To none save him, she told her sorrows o'er—
To none save him did ever she relate, [create.
Words that are thoughts, and thoughts which as they breathe

IX.

But ne'er for ten long years till that bright morn,
Had Eugene's eye the lands of Burton scann'd ;
For when his Eleänor from sight was torn
He sought for solace in a distant land ;
Though all his rank and coffers could command
Work'd not forgetfulness of her he'd fled,
And oft in sullen mood he'd musing stand
Until he deem'd before his sight was spread
The vision of his brain, and on such phantom fed.

X.

And he had mingl'd with the young and gay
Where soft blue eyes all full of tenderness,
And the wild flash which darker orbs betray
Each dealt its charm and woo'd with its caress ;
Where gentle voices too his ear would press
With gentler tales, told to some witching strain ;
Yet such he heeded not, nor lov'd he less,
For those bright eyes 'neath brighter seem'd to wane—
Each voice was lost in that which must for aye remain.

XI.

Long ERRO watch'd his melancholy air,
Then question'd what his tale of woe might be ;
And Eugene briefly trac'd his life to where
He last met Eleänor. " There do you see
Th' embower'd seat beneath yon shading tree—
There did we part. Oh ! I remember well
How with her blue eyes fondly fix'd on me
Her smiles did wander into words—oh tell
Has time a tomb ?—Where do our hopes long vanish'd dwell ?

XII.

" Where shall I find the grave of buried sound ?
The voice that was such music to my mind—
Where beauty's charm when years have gather'd round ?—
Can summer pass and leave its smile behind ?
Where the dear joys that once did fondly bind
Their chaplets round the heart ?—our tears may fall
When mem'ry whispers—but we may not find—
Grief seek its very birth-cause to recall—
But while I question thus sad silence answers all."

XIII.

Awhile he paused, and then with anxious gaze
Bid ERRO look where stood a rustic maid ;
Ne'er from the ground did she her fix'd head raise
(As though she would all questioning look evade ;)
She gather'd wild flowers from the bank, and laid
Them on each spot where'er his foot had been :—
“ Twice has that maiden met mine eye !” he said,
Nearer she came, yet still her face did screen,
Then sang these words, which seem'd to bear some mystic mean :

I

Since love is dead, then, let me die,
Thine be the frowns that dig my grave ;
And when that spot thou passest by
In mercy give all I would have,—
A tender look,—a tender thought,
For her who lov'd as thou hadst taught.

2

And thou shalt dream of her to whom
Thou once wert all that love should be;
Then shall her spirit leave its tomb
And whisper fondest words to thee;
And thine unconscious answer, dear,
Shall charm once more her list'ning ear.

3

And she will list thy false heart beat
Until she fondly dreams it tells,
Thy love alone is at her feet;
As we may list to far off bells,
Until their measur'd knell, we find,
Becomes the language of the mind.

XIV.

“This is some witchery of sight and sound—
Lov’d vision from mind’s jealous prison past,
Speak on!—speak on, blest phantom! thou hast found
He who will be thine echo to the last!
Throw off thy guise—let but thy shadow cast
Its length upon the ground. On the blest spot
I’ll measure out my grave.” He stood aghast,
As she in heedless silence fled, then not
A word did he, or ERRO, speak;—as to a cot

XV.

Each trac’d her steps, until they stood within
A lowly door where the white roses twin’d
Their mazy wreaths, which seemingly did win
Soft kisses from the air. Naught else could find
A moving breath, but they without a wind
Shook from their lips their language—perfume sweet.
Here might we fondly dream the world all kind—
Here time-deluded hope for aye retreat,
And sans regretful sigh youth’s early visions greet.

XVI.

An aged dame dwelt in that peaceful place,
Who gave her guests a kind and welcome look ;
Each question'd on the object of their chace,
Though nothing could they learn ; she ever shook
Her head and sigh'd, and purposely forsook
The heeding of their words ; and Eugene pac'd
The room in thought, then with a quick grasp took
A lute that hung neglected there—"haste ! haste !"
He madly cried,—“say what fair hand this lute once grac'd ?”

XVII.

The dame at length replied, with falt'ring voice :
“There lady Elcänor's light fingers fell,
As stories say, when fled her fond heart's choice,
With such did she to wing'd warblers tell
Her prayer of love, and made their bosoms swell
With the same melody, that they might bear
On high her thoughts.” “There does her spirit dwell !”
He sigh'd, “Oh ! that my soul could melt in prayer
And wander into heav'n, and meet her smiling there !”

XVIII.

“ Ah ! this then is the silken sash that hung
Around her snowy neck, and here, and here
Oft have I seen her fairy fingers flung !”
As thus he spake, his hand with trembling fear
Fell on those strings whose discord vex’d the ear :—
“ Sad songless lute, alas ! how like this heart !
Each knew the same enchantress. Soft I hear
The song this instrument did last impart :—
’Tis music’s requiem ! still linger where thou art.”

XIX.

In a low whisp’ring voice the old man spoke
With her the aged dame—naught Eugene said,
Nor by a questioning look their commune broke,
The old man wrapt in thought hung down his head,
Then paced the chamber, till he seem’d to wed
Some bright idea, he to the hostess told ;
At length he said, “ This day has wellnigh fled,—
The Spirit of the Lake we’ll each behold ;— [stroll’d.
Come Eugene, come—farewell, kind friend !”—Each forward

XX.

Through soft cerulean æther, one by one
The stars reveal their pale, love-trembling light,
As if by angels' hands they there were hung,
To mark a cloudless pathway for the flight
Of yon pale moon, now climbing heav'n's blue height,
Where lingers yet a roseate tint, as though
Past day then slept, and blush'd, as beauty might
Blush in her tender dreams, which none may know,
Save secret-keeping night into whose arms they go.

XXI.

Now has the melancholy of that moon
Melted the shades of eve to tears, which lie
Upon the lips of clos'd flowers—How soon
The sun-born charms of day have wander'd by!
Earth is enrobed in chilly mists, no sigh
Creeps o'er the shadow-peopl'd scene. Moonlight
Is pensive hour, for then the very sky
Seems stagnant as with thought. Love-moving night,
The language of thy stars createth worlds more bright.

XXII.

The Pilgrim and his sad companion paus'd
Beside the silver'd lake, each gazing around,
And looking for the spirit which had caus'd
The Gossip's tale, and which full credence found
In Eugene's mind ; awhile they stroll'd around
The water's bank, then spied a boat where sate
The dame who was their hostess. " Here was drown'd
The Lady Eleänor," she said, " we'll wait—
Her spirit see." No more on shore the boat did grate.

XXIII.

Forward they glided to a willow'd isle,
In truth a spot where fairy elves might dwell ;
Far off it rose like the enchanted pile
Such raise at times by their enchanting spell,
To hold their revel-routs—to flow'rets tell
The very hour they'll open to the sky ;
Paint wings of butterflies,—the still air swell
With melody.—Oh ! ne'er did lover's eye,
Depict a fairer spot in wildest ecstasy.

XXIV.

And as they reach'd this love inviting spot
Each gaz'd with anxious eye, for here 'twas said
The object of their search was seen ; but not
Ev'n fancied form had yet their sight betray'd.
But hark ! a voice is stealing through the shade
Of sad, grief-planted willows, and ere long,
Noiseless and beautiful, as light through glade,
Glided a gentle form, round whom did throng
Th' enamour'd winds, and buried with a sigh her song.

XXV.

A slight, transparent robe of purest white
Hung round her bosom like a cloud of air,
And slightly veil'd its swelling form from sight :—
Her cheek was pale, but never did love's care
Give thought a language to a face more fair ;
A chaplet from her brow shed dazzling ray,
As though a wreath of glow-worms bound her hair,—
Which fled as cluster'd stars at coming day,
When op'd those eyes which seem'd to give her soul away.

XXVI.

Now, tremblingly, her snowy hand did raise,
A wand, which slowly mark'd a magic round :
Oft on the air-trac'd circle would she gaze ;
And then she'd mark strange cyphers on the ground ;
Fleetly, with step aërial would she bound,
As Eugene's eye her mystic form survey'd ;
Again their list'ning ears were woo'd by sound ;
Forward she came, and 'neath a willow shade,
In wild, yet tuneful voice ! these rambling words betray'd :

I

New born winds, that hold no sound,
Gather, quickly gather round,
And I will fill your breath with song,
That ye may wander far along,
Where many slumb'ring echos lie,
Waiting for sound to give them birth ;
Like stars that hang in cloudless sky,
Unknown, unseen to all on earth,

Until that voice we may not hear
Wanders along and bids appear ;
Then forth they come, in beauty bright,
As echos of their heav'ns own light.

2

Full of frolic, by the fountain,
Dashing wildly down the mountain,
Or sporting in a cloud of foam,
Or slumb'ring on a slumb'ring mirror,
Or roving 'neath a roving river—
Each to our merry crew's a home.

3

When morning spreads its blushing beam
We from our dwellings fly,
And catch the glorious tints that gleam
Upon the new-born sky,
To paint the silent lake and stream.

And sleep-creating night
Alike has its delight ;
Then in those mirrors bright assemble,
Silv'ry beams which o'er them tremble ;
'Tis we who teach the love-pale night
To sigh its sadness into light.

4

When the thunder-loaded cloud
Rumbles forth its vengeance loud ;
Then in gentle sleep we rest
'Neath the wrinkled water's breast.

But ah ! how sweet
When storms retreat,
To rise beneath that tranquil sky ;
Unknown, unfelt
Till tempests melt,
From voice of ire
And liquid fire,
Into a soft repentant sigh !

Ev'ry tint of ev'ry flower,
Ev'ry hue of ev'ry wave,
Brightest beams the sun can shower,
Softest tints the heavens e'er gave,
In that blessed hour we crave;
And weave their sweetly varied dyes
To form the Iris of the skies.

5

By our banks young maidens wander—
Sighing sadly,
Loving madly,
While upon our waves they ponder,
Till their fond hearts grow yet fonder,
As those, our streams, we bid reveal,
Sounds which o'er their senses steal;
Like the honey'd words of those
Source of all their honey'd woes.
And in our mirrors maidens see

Their loveliness more lovely grown,
For by our wond'rous witchery,
When in the tide their shadow's thrown,
We give that shadow ev'ry grace
Young eyes delighted love to trace.
Such the sports we oft pursue,
Oh! we more than happy crew;
Assuming shapes that mortal eye
Ne'er met on earth nor in the sky.

6

Away, ye winds, and write with air,
There are who have no thoughtful care—
None other's griefs to share,
Then all the world will wond'ring rise
And madly anxious breathe in sighs—
Oh! where? oh! where? oh! where?

XXVII.

Whilst her last notes yet linger'd in the air,
Toward her fond Eugene fled, and madly cried ;
“ My Eleänor ! more than enchantress fair,
Oh ! this is bliss ! once more to stand beside
Thee, who hast been of all fond thought the bride,
To list thy voice in music meet mine ear,—
But why so mute ? Are these but dreams that glide
Along my brain ?—Wave not thy wand, where'er
Those bright eyes smile, all lesser spells should disappear.”

XXVIII.

Ev'n as she spake she tremblingly retir'd
Till seen no more. “ Again the phantom's past,
Thus ever hope before mine eye expir'd !
Long look'd for vision thou hast fled too fast !
Farewell, old man, farewell, it is my last.
I'll seek my Eleänor's translucent cell,
And when that magic o'er myself is cast,
Which shap'd her to that seraph form, we'll dwell
In that enchanted spot, farewell, to earth, farewell.

XXIX.

“Behold!” exclaim’d a voice, in accents wild,
’Twas the fair maid seen trembling at his feet.
She cast away her wand and on him smil’d
With look, as fond as mortal eye could meet.
“Now thou art ever mine! oh! look and greet
Thy Eleänor! thy long lost Eleänor!
Blest heav’n! thou lov’st! I feel thy fond heart beat
In this divine embrace, all love.” Naught more
She said—each speechless liv’d the rapt’rous moments o’er.

XXX.

And when her o’er-joy’d heart would let her speak,
“I deem thy questioning, my lov’d Eugene,”
She said, throwing tresses long from off her cheek,
Which still upon his trembling arm did lean,
“Why I am here, and why this guise, I ween,
Are now thy thoughts. All thou shalt briefly know;
Nor will I ask where thy dear self has been,
Till I have spoken.” Never did words flow
In more attentive ears than those which heard her woe.

XXXI.

“Thou know’st when we were parted how my Sire,
(Peace to his soul! oh! whisper not his name)—
Thou know’st how in the madness of his ire,
He threw me in a chamber lone, where came
None save himself and nurse. He had no shame
Whose thoughts left blood-stains where they touch’d; and he
Thus oft would visit me.—Too sad to blame
I let him gaze upon my face, to see
If grief had ta’en those looks my mother gave to me.

XXXII.

“Love blesses my Eugene, when side by side,
We wander in soft twilight and thus tell
Our petty ills which float upon time’s tide,
But when afar, haply in lonely cell,
Upon the dear—endearing one we dwell
Then love is better felt, and better known—
Then worship we past words, and looks that well
Can whisper to the heart we’re not alone—
Lov’d by one faithful heart! we’ve naught to ask or own.

XXXIII.

“That thou may'st know how love can give a life
To the mind's shadow, I remember now :
One morn I woke with thought of thee so rife,
I heard thy voice breathing a tender vow ;
When daylight smil'd into my chamber thou
Wast by my side. I look'd upon thee till
Mine eyes grew dim ; and I remember how
I sang to thee ; and when my Sire came still
I clasp'd the vacant air to shield thee from his ill.

XXXIV.

“So past some years, then this dear woman led
Me from my prison, and with her I came
To humble cot, and learn'd that thou wert fled.
(My scarf thrown on the lake, that all might blame
For self destruction.) My Sire died—his name—
Thou know'st the rest.—But when I met thee late,
Methought I was no more to thee the same.
Blest be this aged man who did create
This masque of love, all dark'ning doubts to dissipate !

XXXV.

“Joy ! joy ! beneath this smile, all fear has past,
(Oh ! thrice blest thou who brought my Eugene here.)
But had forgetfulness thy mind o’ercast,
Thy Eleānor had fled where we could ne’er
Have met again.—Now thou art more than dear !
Yes ! this is worth all pangs my heart has known,
To see a love in these fond looks appear
Years could not claim—to call thee still my own—
Eugene ! blest heav’n ! all grief has flown, for ever flown !”

XXXVI.

Unceasingly the heart will language find :—
Its utt’rance is a look, that telleth all
The rapture that is moving in the mind,
Far better than those syllables which fall
From kiss-enamour’d lips.—They seem’d to call
Each from the other’s heart its happiness,—
(A happiness they would for aye enthrall !)
And the few words they utter’d in caress,
Fled like joy’s tears, unnotic’d, in their own excess.

XXXVII.

They left the isle, and as joy'd ERRO paus'd
To bid the loving pair a last farewell ;
Each o'er and o'er did bless him who had caus'd
Such happy meeting. " I beseech thee tell
How we may best this boon repay, for well
Thou know'st our wish." Thus Eugene spake, and she
Fond Eleänor, did much his wish impel.
The old man wept for joy—" And can it be,"
He said, " That happiness is born with misery ?

XXXVIII.

" I ask no boon—long may'st thou love as now,
Treasure the mem'ry of this meeting dear ;
Long years may leave a wrinkle on thy brow,
Ye'll heed it not, while still your fond souls bear
Such love !—Look up to heav'n and pray ye ne'er
May wake and find the world's heart dead ; for who
Thus robb'd, has not one cherish'd hope for here !—
The music of his thought has past." He drew
His hand athwart his brow—a tear was his adieu.

XXXIX.

The heart that holds the record of past woe,
Cares not to mingle with the world, for where
Mad mirth and fashion flaunt it to and fro
Such find no sympathy to soothe their care ;
So Eleänor and Eugene did repair
To distant land, and quickly trac'd their way.
None save the Pilgrim and the dame did share
The news that they had met, lov'd, and did stray
Afar, for Eleänor's lamented to this day.

XL.

Creation's full of fondest sympathy !—
Voiceless, unseen, and spirit-like it clings
Round mightiest and meanest things that be ;
But more than all the human heart still brings
Its love to shrines—regardless of past stings ;
This Eleänor and Eugene well did prove :
Their love was as love's wild imaginings—
Their thoughts in their creations seem'd to move—
Their days were lighted to eternity by love.

XLI.

When ERRO parted from this gentle pair
He slept—he dream'd—and when he woke his mind
Read o'er again these pictures trac'd in air :
Darkness was on the earth—the heav'ns seem'd blind,
As though an endless desert he did wind
His way, when lo! a phantom came, so black
As we might darkness' very shadow find,
And thus did lead him on a beaten track
Till reach'd a certain spot, then quickly vanish'd back.

XLII.

As there he paus'd the darkness past away ;
The pale moon silver'd o'er the earth and sky ;
The winds were full of sounds, and seem'd to say
“ There the last treasures of thy heart doth lie.”
It was a place of graves ! and he drew nigh
To one which held the language of the air,
And would not let its slightest accents die ;
While on this earth-mound pausing he did stare,
Pale flow'rs sprung up and wrote the name of Gertrude there.

XLIII.

“ And art thou here, my Gertrude !” he exclaim’d,
With a woe-laden voice, “ And can it be
That earth for aye has such dear treasure claim’d ?
How I have pray’d that I might live to see
This spot. Great God ! and hast thou blessed me !
In mercy let us meet on earth once more !
Gertrude ! Gertrude !—Ye stars pray earth to free
Her for awhile, I know ye will implore
Such beauty beaming form, to shed your brightness o’er.

XLIV.

“ Thou hast been with me all these long long years,
Wand’ring with thought as sunlight follows day ;
And even now thy shadowy form appears
All vague and mute, and thus it glides away.
As though this air, which once in heav’n did stray ;
Clos’d not the space thy form had dispossess—
Bright with angelic tracings. I do pray
Thee, Gertrude, lov’d, come from thy long, long rest,
And let mine earthly eye behold thy spirit blest.”

XLV.

As thus he said, a change came o'er the scene,
He stood within a chamber, which contain'd
A couch, half hid by veil of silver sheen ;
The richly gilded walls strange pictures pan'd,
And as he on them gaz'd each slowly wan'd,
New subjects ever bursting into view—
They form'd his life's strange hist'ry ! and remain'd
Till spoken to by thought, and then they grew
Confus'd, and from confusion sprang the scene anew.

XLVI.

Thus did they portion out the strides of time
Until the shadow of his life drew nigh,
He could not look again upon the crime,
For grief had dimm'd the vision of his eye—
He swoon'd, and on the marble floor did lie—
Till sense return'd—then rose from where he laid.
The stars still glitter'd in the azure sky—
The moon lent to their galaxy her aid—
Night seem'd the ghost of day, rob'd in pale, silv'ry shade.

XLVII.

He threw a casement open, and the air
Past o'er his fever'd brow, and cheer'd his heart
He nerv'd himself to see what else was there.
'Twas an enchanting scene, and not a part
Of those sad tracings were, his griefs to start.
Celestial forms the gilded walls now bore ;
A silver table carv'd with curious art
Stood by the couch, with many a flow'r strew'd o'er,
And moon beams made a mirror of the marble floor.

XLVIII.

He turn'd and from the casement gaz'd, and there
No object fill'd blue space ; it seem'd to be
As though the heav'ns had melted earth to air !
Now through this void came softest minstrelsy
With pow'r creative—for 'twas his to see
Sounds wander into scenes, 'neath silv'ry beam !
There's music in the air, the earth, the sea,
And at this hour all slept, and it would seem,
That music made another world while this did dream.

XLIX.

The vision past away, again his eye
Fell on the couch, when lo! its silver veil
Was parted, and there in white robe did lie
His Gertrude! With clos'd eyes, and features pale,
And cold, and breathless as becalm'd gale.
Her bosom was half hid by golden hair,
Her beauty seem'd her beauty to detail.—
As unborn thought of God's she rested there,
Until He call'd her forth immortal light to wear!

L.

“Speak to me Gertrude! speak to me once more—
Speak if it be the dying sigh of sound—
Come to me, death unkind—let me implore
Thee while thou clasp'st thy chilly arms around,
Oh! give her speech! Lost! Gertrude! lost yet found!—
Then silence be my grave!” He said no more—
He sprung towards her with a frantic bound,—
He woke, alas! it was but to deplore!—
The hours had past away and yet they were not o'er.

LI.

This dream may be reveal'd in future page,
And if thus far with pleasure hast *thou* stray'd;
And if one brief hour of *thy* pilgrimage
Has lightly past, not vainly have I laid
My hand upon my lyre, which ne'er essay'd
A loftier object than to guile away
Life's moments render'd sad by grief's dark shade,
Moments which visit all while here we stray,
And oft undream'd of as the storm on summer's day.

LII.

And yet thus far I would not close my lay,
Without one tributary line to thee
From whom my task hath stolen hours away.—
Cynthia! thy smile's enough reward for me!
The world is not a desert while we see
The one green spot, where we can find sweet rest,
Lull'd to forgetfulness of things that be
By her whose love, caressing and carest,
Teaches the o'er-joy'd heart to feel how God has blest.



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